



VOL. XXIII.

AUGUSTA, MAINE, THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 10, 1855.

NO. 20.



MAINE FARMER

"Our Home, our Country, and our Brother Man"

DRYING SEA-WEEDS.

A writer in the Maine Farmer suggests that it may be found profitable to dry and press seaweed and transport it into the country for manure. It will be found very difficult to dry by any ordinary process. We believe there is a way of calcining it, and thus preserving it to produce a flux in the silica used in the manufacture of glass. If there is a lack of "soluble silica" in the soils may not this preparation be just the thing for producing the article. How is it Dr. Holmes? [Farmington Chronicle.]

Burning sea-weeds will of course reduce them to ashes, a great proportion of which will be carbonate of soda. But by burning you dry off the mucilaginous matter, and also much of the carbonaceous matter, all of which would be useful in this species of manure. Fresh carbonate of soda, or what is far better, the caustic soda will be of course valuable for uniting with silica and render it soluble; but the other materials are too valuable to be lost. We hope the experiment of drying, pressing and transporting sea-weeds into the interior, and its use there for dressing, will be fairly tried this summer.

If we had it we would cheerfully order a few tons of it to Dr. Swift for him to try. No doubt we should have a good report of it.

For the Maine Farmer.

CLAY FOR MANURE.

Mr. Editor: I thought I would give you a little information concerning clay manure according to my experience with it. In the spring of 1854, I failed for manure for my corn but I got my piece planted. I went to a clay bank in the highway and got some rank clay as I could find, and hauled it into my field and put a shovelful of it into a hill, the same as I would other manure, and covered it with the soil. I then put my corn on and covered it. The first part of the season it was rather backward, but in a little while it began to grow, and through the drought of the summer the corn looked green, and in the fall it was as stout as some grown on hog manure by its side. It was a rocky piece of ground. I expect to try some more this season.

If you have any more information you can give me I should be glad to hear from you.

Wm. Curtis.

Boudinham, April 16, 1855.

NOTE. Friend Curtis says his land on which he used the clay was rocky, but it is sandy or loamy?

Some years since our neighbor, H. A. Pitts, who now resides in Chicago, Ill., planted some corn on a dry, sandy knoll. Supposing the corn might want a cooler border the summer was out, he sent more than a mile and obtained a load of clay from a brick yard with which he manured his corn, putting a shovelful in a hill. It had a very excellent effect.

Ed.

HOW SHALL WE KEEP OFF THE CROWS?

Mr. Editor:—What do you consider the easiest method and most effectual method of protecting corn fields from the crow?

CORN FIELD.

NOTE. The crow is a great nuisance, and yet we kind o' like the rascal. To keep him off, get some of the loafers that we know of, with more board than brains; give them some crumpled tobacco and a short pipe, and place them about the field. You will never catch any decent crow about your premises while they are there. Perhaps you will say the remedy is worse than the disease. It probably would be. There are so many new preventives for this trouble that we hardly know which is the best, and we believe sometimes when worms and mice are scarce, and crows get hungry, all of them fail. A neighbor of ours, some years ago, who had suffered in this way, managed to catch a crow alive. This he kept in a box, and hired a boy to go every night and morning with it to his field, and pinch or so hurt it as to cause it to set up a terrible squawking. This would arouse all the crows in the neighborhood, and they at first came flying round in full band. An old blunder-buss being discharged in among them once or twice, they took the hint, and for the rest of the season always gave that field a wide berth.

The crow, however, has a good share of Yankee wit, and that's the reason they multiply so fast and stand their ground in spite of all the traps, and guns, and snares that are opposed to them. It is said, if you could have a pair of king-birds build in or near your corn fields, they would drive every crow clear of the lot whenever he showed his head. Will some of our anti-crow friends give Mr. "Corn Field" their experience in warding off the assaults of the pine crow tribe?

Ed.

BEST MODE OF RAISING WOODS.

Mr. E. Holmes:—Dear Sir: Reading an article in the Farmer of March 8th, on the "growing of wood," it struck me at once that many did not know how to produce nut-trees from the seed. Now a few hints would set every one right. I have tried a good many years to raise Oaks, Chestnuts and other kinds of trees, but met with no success, planting them as I did in drills, in common soil. Not one would sprout. In the summer of 1853, I noticed several sprouts as I was working under a chestnut tree, and in digging down through the leaves I came to the nuts from which the sprouts came. I took the hint, and the next fall procured a quantity of nuts, thinking I would imitate nature; I prepared a rich bed, sowing the nuts thickly on top of the soil, covering them with leaves. All the nuts came up and are now doing finely. This manner of planting is to be observed only

for those trees that are designed for transplanting. For woodlots I would recommend the following mode of planting. Select a still day. Let one man drop the seed eight feet apart each way, covering them with a small handful of leaves. Let another man follow with a barrow of heavy soil sprinkling on just enough to keep the leaves from blowing away. Two men in this manner can plant one acre in one day with ease.

If these facts are followed, it will save much labor in the production of wood land. Hoping they will be the means of doing much good.

I remain your ob't servant,

W. Howards.

East Orrington, 1855.

NOTE.—Some of our readers will profit by the above hints. It is true that we live "away down east" in the woods, but the woods are getting amazingly scarce, and unless we go to raising it we shall go cold.

Ed.

For the Maine Farmer.

CHINA, RICE, AND DUCKS.

Mr. Editor:—In a former communication, I said something of the great care the Chinese take to preserve, and convert every thing into manure; they take equally as good care to apply it to the best advantage, so as to get from it the most immediate profit—much of it, the liquid parts from these manure piles, is used as top dressings. In beginning this, I intended to say something about the method of growing rice, which is one of the most valuable crops in Southern China, but the means for producing any good crop, seemed uppermost in my mind. The shores of the Quong Tong are for hundreds of miles bordered by low intervals or flats, which are covered at certain stages of the river waters, upon the whole of which rice is grown. Early in the season, say February, small patches of this ground are prepared and sown with the paddy or unshelled rice, as thick as it will stand upon the ground; as the waters recede, the earth is prepared for the reception of the plants by lightly harrowing, which is frequently done with men, as the cheapest animals—after which it is struck off into drills about one foot apart, when the plants, now about six inches in height, are set, five or six plants together, about six inches from each set. They are irrigated by an occasional rise of the river, and but little more attention is paid to it until ready for the harvest early in September. In many places the waters of the rice fields are so controlled that they can be let on or off at pleasure. Upland rice is of frequent culture, is generally of very small grain, and of the finest quality. The varieties are numerous, from the fine upland rice to the coarse red volunteer. I believe that it is a general law with both animals and vegetables, that are artificially improved, to run back, if left too much to themselves, to their original type. Now this volunteer, or wild rice, is that dropped from the crop in the autumn and comes up in the spring, but the same rice sown in the spring will grow to the character of its predecessor.

After the harvest then comes the duck boats with their innumerable families, to glean the scattered crop. These boats are some dozen feet wide, and of various lengths. They have a platform built across them, making a yard some fifteen feet square, this space is crowded with ducks, that have been hatched in ovens. They are let loose upon the fields during the day, at night they are recalled to their boats by a whistle, and although there may be a dozen boats and thousands of ducks, they will all repair to their respective boats with unerring certainty.

Salted, dried and smoked ducks are an article of much commercial value. An immense quantity of the eggs, or the albumen of them, are by some process converted into a sizing which is applied to their fishing nets, and adds greatly to their durability. The yolks are dried whole, and in all the markets are for sale as a superior article of food. Perhaps some day you may be taken through a Chinese market.

May, 1855.

AGRICULTURE.

NOTE. Thank you, Dr. Agricola, for the "Rice and the Duck." As you have been an old student among the "Celestials," and (as I can ratnap with the Shee Shonghoose, should like to hear more.

Ed.

For the Maine Farmer.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

Mr. Editor: I am happy to find in your correspondent "G," of Portland, one that can touch the strings aright, on this topic. One who can play so well should not be silent. It has been neglected too long. It needs to be illustrated in every public form, and those who are to be benefited shall feel its force. It is the one thing needful for the farmer.

Why may not the sons and daughters of farmers be instructed at school, when young, in the duties that will be demanded of them in after life? Is there anything so complicated and abstruse in these duties, that they cannot intelligently be comprehended, by a child of ordinary intelligence, at the age of ten or twelve years?

I have a neighbor, a millionaire in fortune, by his good luck in marrying a lady of mind as well as money, whose business as a banker is in the city, but whose residence is ten miles without, on an extended tract of land, comprising rock, wood, swamp and meadow, who has been endeavoring for a dozen years past, to show what can be done on such land. He has a son about twelve years of age, whom I have repeatedly met on this farm. Having learned that this boy to be a farmer, I have taken occasion, in the absence of the father, to converse with him about the operations going on upon the farm.

I have found him prepared to answer all reasonable questions about these operations. He understood why such a piece of land is appropriated to the growing of corn—why such a piece is used for grass—why the sheep are penned here at one time, and there at another—why the yard about the stable is made dishing, and why the hogs are permitted to run under the stable, where fall the droppings of the horses and cattle—and the benefits to accrue from preventing undue evaporation of the manure. In fact, his mind is an exact miniature representation of his intelligent father, and this without any extra effort of the father to model it in this form.

H.



Bracketed Cottage, with Veranda.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE.

The principles of Domestic Architecture should combine proportion, or symmetry of form externally, and convenience of arrangement of the rooms internally.

Some sacrifice all convenience of arrangement to the external appearance, and others sacrifice form and symmetry to convenience.

The location of the building should have some connection with the external form, and the climate should also be consulted and the building adapted to its variations. For instance, in Italy where the climate is mild and where there is but little or no snow in winter, the flat roof is very appropriate, as it makes a very convenient place for various domestic purposes; especially is it a very convenient and safe place for a family gathering during the pleasant evenings of that region.

But in Maine and in the Canadas where we have snows upon snows during winter, piling up in height and pressing with a heavy weight upon the rafters, the flat roof is inappropriate. The high gable peaks are the very forms to resist such loads as are in some of our long winters thrown upon some of our houses.

The introduction of the Gothic style in the construction of our houses is therefore based in good sense, and when proportion is carefully studied, such houses add beauty to the country.

Downing, whose works on Cottage Architecture have been much read, and whose recommendations are much heeded, has been instrumental in turning the attention of builders to this style.

The following is one of his designs. It is a very good one and may be of service to some of our readers who may gather some good hints from it, if they should not wish to follow it exactly.

There is a partition across the hall, just by the stairs, which is intended to serve as the extreme limits of nursery excursions, on all occasions when decorum in the parlor is the order of the day. The door here, as well as the front door, should have two uppermost panels glazed, so as to light both parts of the hall when they are closed.

"Estimate. The estimated cost of this cottage, well finished, \$1278." This, of course, would vary in different localities, and would be higher now than for several years past.

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Land Farm, Minot.

NOTE. The number of corn planters now invented are quite numerous, but the one mentioned by our friend above is the simplest of all. Those drawn by a horse, or horses, when made right and strong, are very useful. The surface of the ground ought to be pretty well smoothed and pulverized.

There are other kinds which may be used by man or big-boy power. These operate on different principles, some in one way, some in another. The following sketch, from the N. E. Farmer, represents a pretty good one of this kind:

Mr. Editor: Being at the house of an ingenious neighbor, last spring, I copied in a little drawer of curiosities something which was said to be a "Corn Planter."

To make it take a large whole-top thimble, punch a hole near the rim, and with a nail fasten it to a small handle four or five inches long, and it is done. I made two, and liked them much, both for corn and beans. If the seed is small and the thimble holds too many, just fill it partly up with putty. Try it, brother farmer. But, Mr. Editor, what about the corn planter drawn by a horse? How does it work on different

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sest out of our orchards, in Kennebec, the Roxbury Russet, in my opinion, would be the last. One orchard, in this county, has produced, in a single year, apples, that have sold on the spot, after being picked, (nearly all of which were R. Russets,) for \$8.50. Many others raise a large quantity of them, which sell readily, in the spring, at a high price; and vastly more could be sold if the farmers would raise them. Although most other sorts were cheap last fall and winter, the "Roxbury Russet" brings a good price now.

The Bellflower spoken of in a former communication, is not the Yellow Bellflower, mostly cultivated, but a White Bellflower, mostly originated in France, brought into this country by the way of England. A large white apple, resembling the Yellow Bellflower in shape, but not in color or flavor, being much better than any that I have seen of that sort. They were grown on red iron mine soil, which is the best soil for orcharding, and, as stated, are fine and nice, both for eating and cooking. One of the best varieties of their season. The tree is hardy in this climate.

The Baldwin bears prodigiously well with us, for a time, but the wood is softer, and not as hard or lasting as the Russet or Bellflower. Many trees of the Baldwin, grafted half as long ago as the other varieties, are dead, while the Russet trees are healthy, vigorous, and bearing well.

It is something with trees as with stock; if well fed they will thrive well, and pay better on the cost than if poorly fed; give them a good start by setting and dressing them right, and they will receive a bountiful harvest in due time.

Augusta, April 17, 1855.

For the Maine Farmer.

APPLES FOR CULTIVATION.—No. 6.

Somebody once facetiously located the centre of "Down East," between the Kennebec and Penobscot Rivers. We thank somebody for the hint.

Taking the centre so located, the boundaries marked by Nature's lines of beauty and utility; a centre that may well represent a portion of our Country, amply described in general terms in prose and song; a centre worthy to sustain and reflect the consequential solidarity, that is destined ere long to attach to the name of the immaculate "Down East." A centre stamped by Nature's unerring laws, (if the entire circuit of those laws has been noted by erring man,) at the great fruit garden of these States. It is from this centre and of it that we speak.

The great prevailing cause of failure in the fruit crop of this country is frost, and cold north-east winds in spring. Next comes summer drought to shorten and destroy the crop when set. Lastly, myriads of insects, &c.

From our experience in apple culture in Piscataquis, we adduce the fact, that certain varieties grafted here, have produced fruit without an instance of failure, now about 30 years. Why, our Southern friends may ask, are we exempt from killing frosts in Spring? Our answer may be—hardly know what Spring is. 'Tis but a step from Winter to Summer, in "Down East."

Last year, the spot in Piscataquis River, as seen from my window, was cleared of ice May 1st; the ice then going out so thick and strong (2 ft. thick,) as to sweep off a strong bridge and mill below. At the same time the snow lay in deep drifts on our farms, and the roads were just being opened to travel. On the last day of the same month apple trees near the river were white with blossom. This year the River was cleared of ice, April 22d.

Our friends who rejoice in long and pleasant Springs, get their embryo fruit frozen, while ours is securely looked up in the bud.

Summer drought has never materially affected the size or number of our apples.

Hurtful insects have not yet laid a heavy tax on the time of the careful owner of trees. The care of a thousand orchard trees with us has required but a few hours in each year, to keep rid of the caterpillars, though they are natives of our forests.

We have proved to ourselves, and will yet demonstrate it to the rest of mankind, that apple trees will endure our rigorous climate, that when grown, they yield their fruit with a surety unknown in warmer localities; and that the fruit will favorably compare with that of the country at large. Can any one gainsay our last position?

Our friends at the State Capitol, saw a few specimens last winter from this country, that the writer knows were produced on old trees that never had culture, other than to cut and remove the little grass that grew under them, or perhaps pasture them with swine or other animal manures. The trees produced the apples, when left to the care of Nature's genial laws. Those laws work out a crop of the fruits of man's adoption, in his temporary absence, quite as well as when the owner is present, to give such treatment, as in a majority of cases the trees receive. Without four fold grounded contradiction, I make the assertion, that apples, as they are produced here, and as the most of them will continue to be produced, will favorably compare with those of the country at large. I speak from the little knowledge I have gained from an examination of some of the greatest collections of varieties, that have ever been exhibited on this continent.

Brother Farmers—I have spent some old hours in the last few weeks, in talking with you of the things that nearly concern the temporal welfare of every inhabitant of the State. I have been obliged to write hastily, and really have not had time to make my communication shorter.

I have been impelled to talk thus with you, from a feeling of duty. Believing it for us to compare notes, to stimulate, aid and sustain each other, in this as well as all other matters pertaining to our noble and ennobling calling. If aught has been said, that may quicken you to thought, incite you to action, or strengthen your love for our beautiful State, the feeble effort of a humble individual has not been in vain. As one of you, I am willing "to spend and to be spent" in the common cause.

I have shown you, in the way and manner I have chosen, that our State is pre-eminently

adapted to the production of good apples. It is not less so for some other classes of fruit. Plums, cherries and some varieties of pears flourish and produce remarkably in most localities.

Brother Farmers, before we part, give me your ear for a few words of advice. If you are not the owner of a fruit book, do not delay buying one. Cole's is the cheapest, and is full enough for your first season. Use your occasional odd half hours, that are turned to little account, in tending choice fruit trees. A little money and a little time judiciously expended for a few years, will strikingly change the aspect of your home, and give pleasure both to the eye and the palate. You will soon find space to be the most profitable investment made on your farm. Qualify yourself at once by study and practice to set a tree in the best manner, and not expose your ignorance by asking your neighbor, or your nurseryman to direct you how to do it. Do not ask everybody to give you a list of the six or the twelve best varieties of apples for cultivation. All this is a mere matter of individual taste. There is not a man in the world that can furnish me with twelve varieties that I should be satisfied with to raise and enjoy, without adding another twelve to them. Understand me to mean, for home purposes—for myself and friends. We expect the active aid of every hand owner, in our utilitarian purpose of beautifying and enriching our State, till our fame shall be established on such a basis, that all who have gone out from us to people every State and Territory, even to the great Pacific, shall rise up as one man and call her blessed.

C. C.

For the Maine Farmer.

THE FARMER'S JOYS.

BY GEO. W. BLAKE.

Now, fields are clad in bright array,

And Nature dons her loveliest gay,

And April dyes leaves sweet May,

Queen of the year;

Cold Winter's hastened far away,

And Spring is here.

Now, the bright morn'g peeps o'er the hills,

Its rays light around distils,

And music from the mountain rills,

Falls on the air;

A respite now my spirit feels,

From cumbered care.

On leafy bough and blossomed tree,

The merry birds so blithe and free,

